

Kentucky Construction Career Days

**September 21-22, 2005
Shelby Co. Fairgrounds
Shelbyville, KY**



The first annual Kentucky Construction Career Days was hosted by the Kentucky Construction Career Choice Council (K4C) from September 21-22, 2005 at the Shelby County Fairgrounds in Shelbyville, KY. Over this past year, the K4C decided to develop a Construction Career Days Fair (similar to the one held in Ohio) to expose high school students to the many rewarding and diverse careers in the industry.

Mark Senninger of Senninger Plumbing, Inc. and chairman of the K4C, noted that the Kentucky Construction Career Days was a “prime example of what happens when industry works together to increase the awareness of the wide variety of careers that are available in the construction industry. Representatives from the Associated Builders and Contractors, the Associated General Contractors, the Kentucky Association of Plumbing, Heating and Cooling Contractors, the Kentucky Association of Highway Contractors and the Home Builders Association of Kentucky worked together for months to plan this event.”

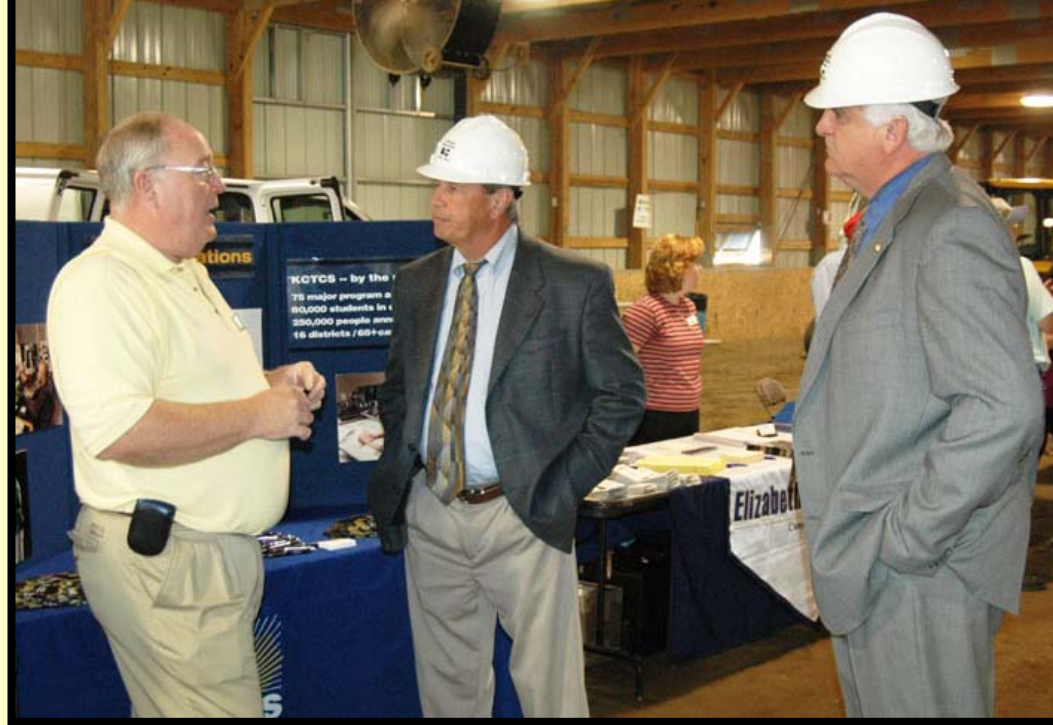
OCTE Construction Academic Consultant Tommy Sutton has worked with the K4C for the past five years and was one of many central office employees involved in this first time event.

“The Kentucky Construction Career Fair was a great opportunity for students to meet, see, and get hands-on experiences in the construction industry directly from major construction company, association, and post secondary program personnel,” says Sutton. “It was a win-win situation for the students and all the participants hosting the event. The yearlong planning was well worth the success of the fair. I have been delighted with the positive comments we have received from all of our instructors who attended the event.”

A total of 22 KY Tech ATCs attended the event. This brought over 775 students and instructors to the fairgrounds to participate in this 1st annual event.

Top Photo: OCTE Executive Director Emil Jezik (center) and Deputy Executive Director Lewis Carter take a moment to speak with a KCTCS representative.

“The collaborative efforts of the businesses, associations, contractors and educational groups have brought about an event that was geared toward a specific audience,” says Jezik. “We were glad to support this event with the participation of our KY Tech schools. We appreciate each member of the K4C group for the time, effort and energy it took to pull this type of event together. It was a great way to positively promote vital construction careers and its impact on the economy.”



OCTE Division Director John Marks has his blood pressure taken by a Shelby Co. ATC health sciences student under the direction of Instructor Peggy Williford.

“This was a perfect example of business and industry working together to provide a real life event where students had an opportunity to learn about careers in the construction field,” says Carter. “The K4C is to be congratulated for their hard work and dedication in making this construction career event a reality. It was a pleasure to work with Juva Sizemore over the past several months in organizing this event.”

“Having spent the first 20 years of my career working or teaching in construction trades, it was fascinating for me to see that students still get excited about construction careers,” says Marks. “Like anything else in life, if we can’t somehow experience it - then we can’t understand it and this construction fair allowed all the trades people to share their passion with the upcoming generation. Our students learned that it’s not only a great job that pays well, but, it’s fun.”



**Photo at left:
Paducah ATC Welding
Student Jeremy Artis,
who also serves as the
local KY Skills USA
president is taking part in
a “quick draw
competition.” Watching
his performance is David
Ballinger, a Brandeis
Corporate Service
Manager and part of the
Kentucky Equipment
Distributors display.**

“I like working with cars, so I liked this competition,” says Jeremy. “It’s like using an impact wrench when you work on a car. My welding instructor Mr. Virgil Holland is a great guy and has taught me a lot this year. I’m glad we were able to come to this event.”

“It’s critical that we as distributors come together to provide students with an opportunity to learn more about our industry,” says Ballinger. “This type of event brings us face to face with ambitious young people that may someday be a vital part of our business activities.”

“I think it’s a good opportunity for the students to learn about the construction industry,” says Paducah ATC Welding Instructor Virgil Holland.

“I love this job,” says Paducah ATC Carpentry Instructor Shane Darnall. “I think it’s a great opportunity for students to get out here to see things first hand. It’s also important for them to have these industry representatives explain the real world aspect to them.”



Madison ATC
Electricity Student
Zachary Minix talks
with Tim and
Christine Parsons
of Parsons Electric,
Inc.



Photo at right:
Mary Jo Morton,
education
director for the
Associated
Builders and
Contractors Inc.,
of Kentuckiana
discusses
career pathways
with students
during the
event.

Above photo: Ralph
Senninger of Senninger
Plumbing, Inc. explains
the finer art of handling
a torch to one of the
many students who
visited his display.

Photo: Lake Cumberland ATC Carpentry Instructor Charles Roy and his students watching a concrete demonstration.



Photo at right: Montgomery Co. ATC Carpentry Instructor Jeff McCarty watches as some of his students take part in the masonry activity.

“This event exposes students to the different opportunities and jobs for their future,” says McCarty. “We can’t teach this in the classroom.”



Photo above: Mason Co. ATC Principal Juston Pate watches as one of the students from his school tries his hand at laying brick.

“The Construction Career Days program was a great success for our students,” says Mason Co. ATC Electricity Instructor David Collins. “This is the best event I have attended in my four years as an instructor. Our students commented on how much they were exposed to about jobs once they graduate. One student has already made up his mind to work for Lowe’s. He said the representative talked him into it by describing duties and salary.”



Photo at left: Clark Co. ATC Carpentry Instructor Richard Butcher (who was also the 2002 Associated General Contractor's (AGC) Teacher of the Year) and his students take part in one of the many construction activities during the Construction Career Days event.

"When we have the opportunity to align with industry and expand the career horizon that our students should experience, we are mixing the right ingredients for an excellent educational outcome," says Butcher. "In this case, (according to AGC and the Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC)), it's because construction is

- *10% of the Gross National Product (GNP)**
- * the second largest employer (government is the first)**
- * actually producing a product**

Clark Co. ATC Principal Karen Bothun, flanked by OCTE central office staff member Karla Tipton, take time to discuss the various careers in today's construction industry with members of the Elizabethtown Technical College faculty.

Says Bothun, "Clark County ATC was able to bring 90 students and 8 chaperones. The field trip was made possible through the support of the local School-to-Careers grant and Cora Heffner, the community education coordinator. It was wonderful that so many students from our carpentry, electricity, and welding programs had the opportunity to participate. Each came back to Winchester with a different story of what they saw, who they met, and what they learned. When the students returned to school, they shared their experiences with students in other programs. The hard hats were a big hit, and every student wanted one. We will likely see increased interest in our construction programs because many students were able to see the opportunities available in construction."





From left to right front row: Oldham Co. ATC Carpentry Students Taylor Brown, Cody Woods and Adam Sharp. Back row: Oldham Co. ATC Carpentry Instructor Tim Kelley and a representative of Hinkle Contracting.

“This is great!” says Kelley. “Most of my students are juniors and they have already asked if we can come back next year. We are pleased this type of event was coordinated and held in Kentucky. My students have made numerous contacts with contractors regarding employment upon graduation. This has been very successful and made a positive impression on all of my students.”



Photo at left: Hughes Jones Harrodsburg ATC (HJHATC) Electricity Instructor Joe Fister (left) and Lee Record (r), Messer Constructor Co. labor coordinator for the Lexington market, check the harness on HJHATC electricity student Jeramy Hudnall.

Mr. Lee Record was a student at the Harrison Co. ATC from 1977-78 under the direction of former Instructor Steve McKinney. He went through the ranks to become what he is today and got his start from a KY Tech school.

“This is our future and you have to keep up interest,” says Record. “Some brought equipment for students to look at and we brought equipment for the students to try out.”

During live demonstrations, safety is the major factor. Messer Construction had a seasoned professional positioned next to the student to immediately shut down the equipment in case of an emergency.

“Construction Career Days helped my students see how big the market is in the construction area. They were able to talk with some electrical contractors and see the great demand there is after high school,” says Fister. “It also gave contractors a face to go along with the name that we will be calling and referring to them when our students graduate.”

“My observation is that there is an example of every type of construction activity and related support of every type construction activity in the state including commercial, residential, industrial and transportation,” says Kentucky Association of Highway Contractors Executive Director Charles Loveorn.

“Our students will greatly benefit from this hands-on activity,” says HJHATC Carpentry Instructor Eddie Durr. “The industry representatives have presented our students with a no-nonsense real world presentation of what careers are available, how much they can make and that there are advancement opportunities. Let’s hope this is an annual event.”

“Being able to come here has been exciting,” says HJHATC Student Sam Blackburn. “I’ve learned a lot.”



Left to right: HJHATC Student Sam Blackburn, HJHATC Carpentry Instructor Eddie Durr and Kentucky Association of Highway Contractors Executive Director Charles Loveorn.



Whayne Supply Co. Supervisor of Technical Training Ray Genet discussed heavy equipment with Garrard Co. ATC Carpentry Student David Stamper.

“We see a tremendous opportunity in making contact with people who are interested in the trades,” says Genet. “We promote post secondary

training, but the 4-year program isn’t necessarily for everyone. We are interested in making sure that we can convey the message that there are career opportunities in diesel and heavy equipment. When we first heard about this construction career fair, I thought this was a natural and so that’s why the company could get on board to participate. We are looking forward to future years. Our support shows K4C and the schools that there is an interest in this type of event.

Home Builders Association of Northern Kentucky Education Director Mike Enzweiler was pleased with the overall construction career fair.

“I think the best advertisement for this event is that it is hands-on,” says Enzweiler. “We decided to hold a nail driving contest and it’s been very popular. We were interested in showing kids that there are many careers available and that they may be capable of doing something and maybe not even know it. This has been a great event.”

“Madison Co. ATC Electricity Student, under the direction of Mr. Mike Sandlin said, “It’s been fun and I’m glad we were able to attend. I’ve learned a lot.

Photo at right: Philip Cook shows Mike Enzweiler how fast he can drive a nail.





Photo: Belfry Machine Tool Technology Instructor Paul Williamson (stripped shirt) and students from his school pose with AGC Recruitment and Marketing Director Teena Oaken.

“Our students were amazed at all the equipment and activities presented during this event. They were thrilled to be a part of the action and clearly benefited from the experience,” says Williamson. “The coordination it took to put together this type of event deserves an A+. It’s great that our technical education students finally have something to attend that directly relates to their program area and helps them better understand the context of the real world. While we can do many activities in our classrooms, we can’t teach what they can experience by attending something like this. We hope it’s an annual event. It’s worth it!”

Oaken, a K4C member, helped give out hard hats and instructional ground rules when the students arrived. She was also seen on several occasions disseminating AGC give-a-ways.

Shelby Co. ATC Health Sciences Instructor Peggy Williford and her students were a major part of the two-day event. They were on hand to provide blood pressure readings for participants.

As always, this type of activity is a big success. It also provided the students with an opportunity to perform in a real world activity.



Photo at left, front row: Health Sciences Students Stevie Young, Angela Berry, and Chrishanda Wright; back Row: Instructor Peggy Williford, Jennifer Barstow, and Katie Shields.

***All were proud to be part of the activity and tickled that they received a hard hat.**



Shelby Co. ATC HOSA and SkillsUSA students were able to earn money for their clubs by running the concession stand during the two-day construction career fair.

Photo at right: Carpentry Instructor Claude Gross of Bluegrass Technical College is shown with a Fairdale High School student giving a lesson on framing up a room.

Gross, a member of the K4C, helped with many of the details in order to make the event a success. He brought approximately 25 students from his class and they provided several “hands-on” activities for the participants to enjoy. The exhibit area was a success and filled throughout the two days.

“It’s been an honor to be part of the K4C and help out with this event. My students have handled the responsibility of working with so many students in a professional manner,” says Gross. “I think we have promoted our school in a positive light and shown what we can accomplish when we all work together for such a worthwhile cause.”



Photo at left: OCTE employee Tommy Sutton takes a moment to enjoy the successful event. He has wanted to see KY Tech instructors and students involved in this type of an activity for several years. His efforts to help develop and refine the idea have been rewarded because so many across the system benefited from the experience.



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